

17 September 1986

ZAKHAROV CHARGES A "SETUP" BY F.B.I.

By **ELAINE SCIOLINO**

Special to The New York Times

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y., Sept. 16 — Gennadi F. Zakharov, a Soviet employee of the United Nations accused of espionage, said today that he was the victim of a setup by the Federal Bureau of Investigation.

In his first public statement since his arrest on Aug. 23, Mr. Zakharov said there was no connection between his case and that of Nicholas S. Daniloff, an American reporter who Washington says has been charged with espionage in Moscow as a retaliation.

"I am convinced a provocation was organized by the secret services of the United States," Mr. Zakharov said in Russian through an interpreter at a news conference. "In other words, it was set up."

He denied that he ever asked for, received, or paid for secret information from a contact he identified only as "John," whom he said he hired to do research and photocopying.

"As far as secret or confidential materials are concerned, I never asked for them and I never got any," he said.

Zakharov Denies Payment

Mr. Zakharov denied that he was paying John \$1,000 for three secret documents when he was arrested on a Queens subway platform, as the F.B.I. has charged. He called the story of the payment "a pure invention."

But he said, without explanation, that he had been carrying a large amount of money at the time of his arrest.

He also said that he had met regularly with John, and paid him.

"I compensated his expenses from my personal funds, I mean, his personal expenditures involving selection and copying of open literature," he said.

Mr. Zakharov said that he had been under F.B.I. surveillance before his arrest, that his telephones were tapped and that F.B.I. agents entered his apartment "without my permission."

In response to Mr. Zakharov's statements, William M. Baker, assistant director of the F.B.I., said:

"The affidavit that we submitted in support of the arrest and search of Mr. Zakharov and the subsequent true-bill indictment returned by the Federal Government both met the requirements of probable cause. The F.B.I. will not add credibility to today's assertions by Mr. Zakharov and has no further comment."

Published Work in Physics

Mr. Zakharov, dressed in a gray pin-striped suit, appeared relaxed as he sat at an oval mahogany table in the main reception room of the Soviet Mission.

Flanked by three Soviet officials and an interpreter, he read a prepared statement and then answered questions. He occasionally conferred with Yevgeny Khutovoi, a mission member.

Presenting himself as an international civil servant with advanced degrees and publications in physics, Mr. Zakharov said his duties at the United Nations Center for Science and Technology, where he has worked since 1982, were to collect and appraise information on scientific developments for use by developing countries.

To this end, he said, he visited libraries and universities and it was during a visit to Queens College that a notice on the bulletin board caught his eye.

"One of the students offered his services for retrieval of scientific and technological literature on a temporary basis and for a moderate fee," he said. "That was how I met John."

Identified by F.B.I. as a Guyanese

The F.B.I. has identified Mr. Zakharov's contact as a permanent resident alien from Guyana who is in his mid-20's. Mr. Zakharov encouraged John to apply for a job with a high technology department after he graduated from college, according to the F.B.I.

Mr. Zakharov said John was critical of American policies and the racial prejudice of white Americans.

"I was not hiding my contact with John," Mr. Zakharov said. "I believe that F.B.I. officers did approach John, and bearing in mind his plight in this country and his desire to obtain U.S. citizenship, brought heavy-handed pressure upon him with a view to using our relations to organize a provocation."

Mr. Zakharov said John had no access to secret information. "It was a complete surprise to me when John gave me a package which was alleged to contain secret documents," Mr. Zakharov said. "I did not see the documents, nor am I aware of the contents."

As soon as John gave him the package, Mr. Zakharov said, "I was seized by persons unknown to me who used physical force to push me to the ground and put three handcuffs on me."

"I thought at the time that these were terrorists," he continued, "because, as you know, many Soviet citizens who reside here in New York constantly receive threats by telephone or by letters about the intentions of various organizations that exist in the United States either to kidnap or kill some Soviet diplomats of United Nations Soviet employees. Imagine my surprise when they told me they were F.B.I. officers."

Mr. Zakharov called his detention in New York "very difficult, very hard on me in the beginning."

"I was confined to a single cell where it was cold and damp," he said.

He said it was only through an official protest that "I was allowed to get some of my underwear to protect myself from the cold."

Mr. Zakharov has been given a paid leave from his job at the United Nations, pending the outcome of his case.

"I hope that my case will be resolved swiftly and that I will be able to return back home to my family, my parents and friends," he said.